

Vital Education, The record of an Experiment.

More than once The Editor of the Special Reports on Education has done me the singular honor to ask me to write a Report of our work. I have had some diffidence in complying because such a report must be to some extent the record of personal efforts to work out an ideal of education more or less personally evolved, but a phrase in the report of our inspectors for the year just closed (Rev. F. J. Phelps) gave me as a review a keynote for our fair reflection. He speaks of the abundant vitality of the work in the House of Education, a secondary Training College for women teachers, chiefly from mothers in families. I have thought some times that what Mr. Phelps characterizes as the "vitality" of the public mind at home school on the subject of secondary education is due to the fact that this education

cannot always be described as being
 that young people are turned out
 from excellent schools debilitated
 as far as their minds go. Now we
 are in this Training College, know
 very well how the "sharp impudence
 of a bad success" takes; we have
 many negligences & ignorances
 to mourn over, but, we think,
 we work upon a few plain
 principles whose effect is
 vitalising. If we do not
 proclaim our errors it is because
 they are not due to the great
 principles I am anxious to set
 forth which I think certainly
 result in intellectual vitality.
 We do not seek as the de-
 graded young women who have "graduated"
 or been "matriculated" or have
 passed any examination signi-
 fying some such educational
 standard. Young women as yet
 who over the mountains, over

as any one from ~~any~~ ^{any} 18 to 40. It
 is not possible to have been prepared
 for the Senior Local Cambridge
 Examination say in English Literature
 & modern languages. Latin & Greek
 & all the better if she has
 passed in two ^{or 3} of the subjects of
 the ^{Cambridge} Senior Local Examination.
 In addition to this we rather make
 account of some general culture
 reading, fluency in speaking
 one or two foreign languages
 some musical ability. We
 do not mean to mind how few young
 people play & even the piano, ^{and} with
 one? to be able to do so is ^{not} a
 disadvantage, ^{to a considerable} ^{to a considerable} extent.
 With this modest equipment
 we find that young people
 come to us with receptive mind
 open to the conviction that
Education may be desirable
 & profitable in the best of
training has nothing whatever

to do with cramming, but must
be accomplished by the student
himself, for himself & himself.
At the end of two years the result
is usually gratifying.

Our work in the College is limited to
training; we do not consider that
we teach except incidentally by
way of complete training in the method
of teaching given subjects of instruction;
but in this way we cover a good
deal of ground. Modern Languages

(French German Italian)

receive much attention; the Counin
Method is our basis of work, as
affording much training & development
of the ear in catching foreign words
& of the vocal organs in producing
them; but as this method can
be taught only by persons who
have some command of the language
we do a great deal in the way of
reading & lecturing. The students
for example go through considerable
courses of French History & French

Literature as well as Grammar &
 Composition, all such lectures
 being given in French. We do not
 accomplish so much in German
 but several of the ^{worht of classical authors} ~~German Classics~~
 are read with the German Masters.
 We take up Italian, believing that
 the more spoken language & which
 attempts to much more to ~~be~~ ^{are}
 linguistic difficulties simplified.
 Our aim in the teaching of Latin
 is to turn out our Primary form
 able to carry little boys off to as
 far as the reading of Caesar,
 while our Secondary form
 may or may not be able to
 read Vergil, Livy, Cicero, Horace
 according to where their former
 education has left them: but
 our point is that Latin like
 the modern languages should
 be learnt in a living way i.e.
 that speaking, writing & reading
 should be called into use from

the beginning.

In the teaching of Mathematics, again our endeavour is that Algebra should be based on Arithmetic that the mind should be early accustomed to work with other symbols as well as the digits. Our primary government should be able to teach little boys & girls as far as the 1st B^o of Euclid at any rate.

While in algebra they should be able to teach the simple rules.

The secondary government work at

the 1st 6 Books of Euclid according as their previous education has enabled them while at the same time reading such books as *Phylogia*, *Realis on Algebra*, *Prof. Clifton's* *Common Sense of the Great Sciences*, *Harrison's* *Principles of Science*.

A good deal of time is given to Science in connection with Nature Study. Physical Geography is largely deduced from an examination of the district, which is particularly rich in examples of watersheds, River basins, Sources - Springs - Lakes, Rivers, Tributaries. Geology in the same way is studied from the basis of the Geology of the district & the formation with ^{both the} ~~outcrop of~~ line stone - Evidence of glacial action & volcanic disturbances. The flora & fauna of the country are carefully studied in situ & a general knowledge of Zoology & Botany are obtained from such

W. B. as the Treasurer

Sept. folder

We own a superbly well planned botanical garden to the kindness of the Rev. G. T. Tuckwell, an admirable botanist who constructed it for us.

The students keep it up with much spirit, the expense being appropriated by the several ~~professors~~ ^{professors}. They go through a course of Human Physiology & Hygiene taught by the examination of the Nat. Health Society, the Education Board.

Nature work especially is done everywhere. Every one keeps a Nature Diary, in which day by day she notes or paints facts or objects that have interested her. Games are played in relation to Nature work. Every one knows when & where the robin is first to be seen, the boy hears the water wheels, where ^{the} the curlew is first seen & heard, where & when

pointed out and then perhaps
 also are to be seen and birds
 walk. "Plant walks" for boys
 & probably walks of small
 groups of students with an
 authority on that particular
 subject are of almost daily
 occurrence; there is always
 an object for an expedition or
 a mountain climb. Hockey
 is the game in favour with
 us as it falls due in the least
 inviting months. Handicrafts
 receives much
 attention & affords a good
 deal of finger work.
 The course of Cardboard
 Model set by the Educational
 Handwork Assoc. & examined by
 them we find an admirable
 basis for many sort of handicrafts
 as cultivating deftness & strength
 of hand & think of age.
 Having gone through a rather long

Sp 10 p 0492

elaboration some of the most
Hagd other handicrafts are
taken up with singular rapidity.
Basketwork, basketry, wood
baker work, supmaking, boat building
and modelling wood carving in
These handicrafts like wood carving
basketwork is depend largely on
artistic feeling are greatly aided
by the art training that the natives receive.
A training from an artistic sense
the aim of which is to enable them
to express what they see in bold
or rapid water colour or charcoal
sketches.

The power of appreciation is even
more carefully cultivated than their
appreciation in this matter are
are greatly indebted to a friend
who has studied secured reproductions
of perhaps every native
cathedral, monument & which
the British described.

Through the lady's example the same
a fine example of the same

the students get some information with a
 appearance of station. And the students
 learn to cook in order to be able to look their
 pupils a good deal of attention is
 given to Swedish drill & calisthenic
 exercises (Mrs Wordsworth's).

That which links the student employment
 of the students gives impulse to the whole
 is the theory & practice of Education.

hours per week are devoted
 to this subject & each student is
 for about ~~one~~ weeks in the Training
 School & is in sole charge now of
 one class now of another.

Every week two Criticism lessons
 are given before the staff & the rest
 of the students.

These details of work are probably
 the same as in most Training Colleges
 but possibly the students here are
 a little differentiated by their clear
 grasp of a set of working principles
 which give them an easy sense of
 power and purpose.

we say that, 'Education is an atmosphere
a discipline, a life' 'atmosphere'
differs from 'environment' in being
more pervading & less open to
arbitrary manipulation.

By a 'discipline' we understand
the formation of the habits of the
good life & of the alert intelligence;
By a 'life' we understand that
the function of education is to
sustain the noncorporeal life
by a fit nutriment of ideas.

The attitude of the teacher is expressed
for us by Dante's Humble Plant
& our attitude towards subjects
of instruction is figured in what
we call our Educational Creed,
that particular frescoed wall of
the Spanish Chapel in Florence which
represents the descent of the Divine
Spirit, first on those in the upper
chamber then below on Moses,
Prophets & apostles and again

What is the best way to Train up Children?

Each succeeding age finds our Country dominated by a leading idea or, rather, by a pair of ~~the~~ opposed ideas which, with much confusion of battle, work out ~~practically~~ the same results. 'Imperial Thinking' on the ~~the~~ one hand & 'individual rights' on the other, are these moving ideas. If we range ourselves on the side of the 'imperial thinking' section, a great impetus, almost the impulse of a new career, is given to parents: what more worthy thing can men & women do than bring up families of service to the State! The question of the training of children becomes of imperial importance. That is not a slight thing for it is good for us all to feel that we are an active part of a great whole. But there is a nebulous cloud of ideas as to the best way of bringing up children, & the question of the 'best way' is likely to provoke much discussion. As for the physical care of children we are better agreed, excepting always the few who follow after fads. Children should have a plentiful, ^{varied}, wholesome, simple diet, avoiding ^{unnatural} meats, spices, sauces, tall highly-flavoured foods. They should wear cleanable, simple, loosely-cut, garments. (Ruskin cloth, for example for girls), should have as much air & exercise as can be contrived.

P

should not plot over their books in the evening & should
 get up in time to wash & dress carefully, say their prayers,
 do any little duties that fall to them & eat a good un-
 hurried breakfast before they set off for school.

Most persons will accept all this as part of their scheme
 of duties towards their children.

But ~~the~~ children are persons. From the moment they
 begin to express themselves at all we know that they
 have ways & wills of their own & that we have to deal
 somehow with what is, in fact, a contending force.

Some parents are so happy that, from the very beginning,
 their children are their staunch allies; while the
 history of other families is one of continual dissension
 & contention. Now the question is, must parents needs
 go on in a happy-go-lucky way sliding over or
 blundering against each difficulty as it comes up, or
 is there any ad-apted hood which can help the
 persons engaged in this most difficult full profession
 to follow general principles. We think there is. In the first place, deep in the
 nature of every human being are the two principles
 of docility & authority. Children are born to obey
 & 'their' not to reason why. Parents are placed in
 a position of authority whether they choose it or not.

and this is for the sake of the children & not for the sake of the parents. The wear & tear of continual discussion as to whether this or that shall be done or eradicated is fatal to any progress in character & is a most useless nervous strain upon the children. Children, too, are born to rule, but that is provided for in that Kingdom of make-believe to which every child has an entrance. That a little autocrat should put himself before his parents is an inevitable & mischievous order of things.

P But how can I rule when Tommy won't do things? - says a worn out mother. The conviction that they can rule & ought to rule, partly, justly & all for the children's sake is a great support to too diffident parents who are easily convinced that their children are in advance of themselves.

To recognise a principle is, in itself, a source of strength but to have another auxiliary in the force of habit.

"Use is second nature," we say & some of us know that "habit is ten natures." But we think that habits are come by chance affairs, of which there is no occasion to take heed. Now the habit rule nineteenth of our list. We cannot help our children forming habits; what we can do is to choose the habits they shall form.

Habit runs on the lines of nature for the most part;

the cowardly child habitually lies to escape blame, the
 loving child has indulging habits, the food-hated
 child has a habit of pining, the selfish child a
habit of keeping. Habit working according to nature
 is simply nature in action, growing strong by exercise;
 but habit to be the cause to lift the child must
 work contrary to nature. ~~the~~ find in every home
 children trained in habits of this ~~sort~~ sort; those trained
 in capricious habits who never soil their clothes, in
 reticent ~~or~~ habits who say 'I don't know' about what is
 done at home, in courteous habits who make way for
 their elders, & cetera. There are children trained in
 snuffing habits who never offer to pick up or go, or do.
 Such habits as these, good, bad, or indifferent, are un-
 natural to the children, but are what their mothers have
 brought them up to. As a matter of fact, there is nothing
 which a mother cannot bring her mind up to, there is
 hardly a mother anywhere who does not some time or there,
 catches sometimes, principles sometimes. As for the
 power of habit giving nature into new channels
 we have only to see a pantomime fairy dancing on
 air ^{or a child learning to swim} to know how easily habits ^{may} be formed.
^{normal} ~~unnatural~~ habits are acquired in the same way, for the
 same reason.

The father, the muscles from lotto uses they are put to most easily, lotto uses they are earliest put to. The tissues of the brain behave in the same way. They somehow shape themselves to the thoughts we most often think, thoughts of obedience, or of willfulness, of good or of generous giving, of effort or of idleness; any normal child may be trained on the lines of habits which his parents choose for him.

'says "But, ~~poor~~^{poor} a ~~heart~~^{person}, Mary is naturally sulky, & Tom
headless & selfish," Fanny tells falsehoods, Ethel
will have her own way, in spite of everything & Fred is
unconquerable, careless & heedless'. These, or some of
these, or some other hindrances of the like kind, are
pleaded by most parents with, - "What can I do?" I am
always telling them over his, or "I'm sure I've
scolded him enough about it;" or, "I punish him
nearly every day," or, "I have tried to that little reward
can do^d as penance, every Sunday when he has not lost
his temper during the week," & "nothing seems to make
any difference, I suppose we must just struggle
through." Since the

Since the laws of habit have been discovered, then
nearly, does seem like a means of treatment open for
one another bad habit which, like a pl., in the treatment

spoils, ~~and another~~, an otherwise poor ~~stagnant~~ life, & parents who want to send ^{dearable} ~~poor~~ citizens & noble patriots must consider at the outset what to do with a little laggard, or coward, or tyrant, or ruffian & kill-joy, who spoils the nursery & the home for a side. ^{Can} ~~then~~ reforming good habits, & especially the habit of obedience, is no doubt, the chief general concern of parents for children are naturally persons of goodwill with honest desires towards ~~the~~ right thinking & right living.

Therefore, provide a child with what he needs in the way of instruction, opportunity & ~~wholesome opportunities~~ this character will take care of itself. But one thing more we must do, ^{any} ~~many~~ a child ^{we might say} is, as we have seen, hampered by some hindrance ~~that~~ ^{we must help to} ~~business~~ is to help him to get rid of it. Now there is a sort of popular school, not a maintained school, which means many a school room & many a nursery place of smiling goodness & of some fatherness. All naughty tempers & wilful ways ~~may~~ be quelled by influence, suggestion & the other hyposth. 'I know Tommy means to be a body', with a charming smile & the influence of a restraining personality, will have the desired effect. But Tommy loses force & becomes less of a person day by day, & in the end, becomes a little blasé & thoughtless.

September 7

we may only deal directly with children we may not request the thought ~~they~~ we wish them to think but may tell them straight what they are doing. Bearing in mind the Law of Habit, however, when a habit is formed ~~with~~ by repetition of the same act or thought until some sort of precedent is set up in the brain, we can avoid interruptions & distractions in the world-old way used by old-fashioned nurses which is very simple & psychologically sound. The nurse stops a screaming fit by jingling the baby's rattle. The wife (too often) keeps her husband coming down on George's misbehavior by introducing some diverting topic by means of discussion, the solemn cloud or passionate outbreak may be averted before the child knows he is displeased & is 'naughty'. Feeling comes before thought. Thought keeps well. If a child is sick off to do some interesting thing while he is in the stage of feeling, the repeated record in the brain tissues of sulky fits, or passionate outbreaks, may be broken, the bad habit stopped & a good & genial habit of temper introduced in its place. As soon as the child is old enough to use self-control, he should be taught how to keep himself in order, not by marking himself beyond all the time but by thinking of something else until the bad fit is over.

We may make the lazy child diligent by letting him do by day a limited task & seeing that he does it in the time with play to follow. That is,

if our training in diligence is regular. 3

The untruthful child is often a parasite. His words are gratuitous & would appear to do neither harm nor good to himself nor anyone else. We must remember that children live a good deal in a kingdom of make-believe & what they imagine is as real to them as what takes place. Let them be fed with fairy tales & their imaginings are quite distinct from real life. The child who tells you a lion ran after him down the street is playing in the kingdom of make-believe & the wise mother smiles & says, "pretend?" But, if he says, "that he met Mr. Jones who gave him a penny which he gave to a beggar," it is less easy to see that he is still making believe. He must have a little training & we must make him accurate in reporting facts along with fairy tales to feed his fancy.

(Bearing in mind that our care must be to form the habit of right-doing in whatever direction the child's tendency is to err we shall have pains to see that the right action is repeated, the wrong-doing averted, for a few weeks say, until the desired habit is formed. As the child is able to bear them we shall instill the principles of right-conduct, the motives for right action but meantime we must bear in mind that what we call 'failings', that is habitual transgressions of one sort, failings in truth, or kindness, or temper, have become physical failings in a sense,

that is, have made some sort of record in the brain substance that this record must be obliterated by stopping the bad habit & setting up a good one in its place.

If all the parents in England were to set themselves to train their children on some such lines as we have indicated, we should still all be liable to sudden failures, temptation, pain, but possibly the habitual lounging, wastrel, Kill-jay, would tend to disappear.